

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 32

By Roberts

A RESOLUTION to recognize Bethlehem Baptist Church on the occasion of its 185th anniversary.

WHEREAS, the churches of our nation have been an integral part of our history as a people and have had an unparalleled impact in forming and maintaining a stable and just society; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such dynamic community of faith is that of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Robertson County, whose members will celebrate the church's 185th anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, Bethlehem Baptist Church was established on June 29, 1838, as a church in the Bethel Association by seven charter members, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dorris and their son R.P. Dorris, Mrs. Margurite Baldwin and her children W.D. Baldwin and Polly Baldwin, and Mr. O.G. Guin; and

WHEREAS, Reverend John S. Baldry served as the first pastor, and the congregation met in a small log house with one door and one window near where the present church building stands today in Robertson County; and

WHEREAS, as the congregation of the new church continued to increase, a large shelter of approximately eighty square feet was constructed to accommodate the large crowds that attended the annual October revival meetings; and

WHEREAS, by 1893, Bethlehem Baptist Church boasted a membership of 361 individuals, and by October 1904, 1,000 individuals gathered for the dedication of a new church building; and

WHEREAS, Bethlehem Baptist Church helped its membership withstand life's challenges over the last century and grew stronger itself when the church building was destroyed by a tornado that swept across Robertson County in 1970; and

WHEREAS, since rebuilding, Bethlehem Baptist Church has continued on its mission and become the mother church of four other Baptist churches: Station Camp Baptist Church, Bethel Baptist Church, Oakland Baptist Church, and Mount Carmel Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, as the church celebrates 185 years of service, it continues to be a light in the community, and the devout members of the congregation have faithfully striven to carry out God's work in the world; and

WHEREAS, as a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, Bethlehem Baptist Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and nation, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and the good people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we join in the celebration of the 185th anniversary of Bethlehem Baptist Church, thank the good people of this congregation and their ministers for their notable service to their Lord and the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.